

The Pride of Herndon Marches On

With Band Camp and Tag Day behind them, Herndon High Marching Band season is in high gear

Herndon, VA

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Kathleen Jacoby, Herndon High School's band director, had her work cut out for her when marching band camp began on August 10. Not only did she have to teach 150 students how to perform a new marching show in just under four weeks, she also had to give many of them as well as herself some time to grieve. Sadly, three former members of The Pride of Herndon marching band, Kyle Mathers, Dale Neibaur, and Holly Novak, were killed in a terrible car accident while on a road trip in Texas on Friday, August 7. All three students held leadership positions when they were in the band, and they were known and loved by many of today's band members. Although they all graduated in 2014, they stayed in the area after graduation and still visited Ms. Jacoby and the band frequently. The news of their passing rocked the entire community, and grief counselors were made available to students during the week of August 10.

The Town of Herndon and several local business sponsors showed their support of the band family by graciously providing each member with a t-shirt that features the words "March On" on the front with a logo that was created by the town, incorporating elements of the Town of Herndon brand. The Pride of Herndon logo and the names of Kyle, Dale and Holly appear on the back of the shirt as a tribute to the leaders whose spirit embodied all it means to march on. These shirts were also made available for sale with proceeds going to the Herndon Band Relief Fund which was established for the families of the departed.

Transitioning from this time of grief into a normal band camp routine surely was not easy, but the upper classmen on the leadership team rallied and spent the first week of camp welcoming this year's rookies and showing them the ropes.

When asked about his first Herndon High band camp, Freshman Kyle Nicgorski said "It was a very welcoming and fun experience. It was really cool to be marching with everyone in the band as well as playing with them. I am most excited to be playing at all the football games."

By the last day of camp, on September 3, the students were ready to treat their parents to a special preview of this year's marching show. The theme of this year's show is "Rain or Shine" and it includes tunes such as Good Day Sunshine, Have You Ever Seen the Rain, and Pocketful of Sunshine. The show was arranged by Bob Thurston who was previously a Chief Arranger for the United States Air Force Band and who has written many shows for Herndon High in prior years, as well as many other high school and

"Band camp was a blast (as always) this year!" said Kayla Lundberg. "My favorite part of the show is definitely the cyclone. The band is just sprinting around in circles and the guard is spinning rifles and umbrellas, also running around like maniacs. I'm so excited to see how the effect turns out because it's been fun and hard work trying to make it happen." Kayla is a Junior this year and a part of the Color Guard leadership team.

Senior percussionist Tucker Phillips stated "My favorite part of the show is either the percussion storm, or watching Peter (a drum major) sprint around the band to get to the back podium as we turn around. I've always loved band camp, but being a senior has made the whole experience far more enjoyable, and I feel so into everything."

After a very busy four weeks of camp and a brief hiatus to celebrate Labor Day, the Pride of Herndon hit the streets on Saturday, September 12, for their annual Tag Day event, their biggest fundraiser of the year. This year's show theme, "Rain or Shine", seemed especially fitting that day as it rained quite hard for much of the time the students were going from door to door asking for donations dressed in their marching uniforms and rain ponchos. Their efforts were not in vain, though. Members of the Herndon and Reston communities were extremely generous this year and the band is very grateful. The funds raised from this event will help pay for instructors, equipment, instruments, uniforms and other expenses required to keep the program running.

The Pride of Herndon marching band will be performing during halftime at all of Herndon High's home football games and they will march in the annual Homecoming parade on October 24.

